

Pedro Hernandez Recognized at the 2026 *ALM* Florida Legal Awards Gala

Discussing Effective Mentoring and Leadership in a *Law.com* Q&A

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Hinshaw partner Pedro Hernandez was honored along with other award finalists and winners at the 2026 *ALM* Florida Legal Awards ceremony on April 29, 2026. He was joined at the event by colleagues, friends, and a valued client to celebrate his selection as a Finalist for the Best Mentor Award.

In a Q&A profile published by *Law.com (Daily Business Review)* prior to the ceremony, Pedro shares his perspective on the qualities that define effective mentoring and strong leadership. He discusses the “secret ingredients” behind meaningful mentorship, reflects on the leadership lessons that have shaped his career, and explains how developing patience transformed his approach to guiding young lawyers and building collaborative teams.

Read excerpts from Pedro’s Q&A below.

What is a Secret Ingredient or Two for Effective Mentoring?

“Secret ingredients for effective mentoring are intentional listening, genuine advocacy, and the power of sharing knowledge and experience.

Intentional listening allows one to truly understand a mentee’s goals, challenges, and potential—not just what they say, but what they may be hesitant to say. When mentees feel heard, trust develops, and meaningful guidance can take place.

Genuine advocacy means actively supporting mentees even when they are not in the room—creating opportunities, making introductions, and having their back when it matters. Mentoring is most impactful when it extends beyond advice and translates into real support that helps mentees grow and advance. I have found that passing on my experience enables mentees to build the foundation they need, boost their confidence, and avoid taking the wrong path.”

What is the Most Important Leadership Lesson You Have Learned, and Why is it so Valuable?

“My leadership lesson is that credit for good work should always go to the team, while responsibility for setbacks, mistakes, or bad news must rest with the leader. A leader succeeds because of their team, which is the true secret sauce.

When selfless leaders recognize and honor that, they build trust, loyalty, and strong performers. Leaders who focus on themselves and forget this principle rarely achieve lasting success.”

Which Leadership Skills Were the Most Difficult for You to Develop?

“Patience was a difficult leadership skill for me to develop. I’ve learned that effective leadership requires patience in every aspect of the role and an understanding that meaningful progress takes time. Demonstrating patience with mentees is especially important, as it plays a critical role in their growth, confidence, and long-term career development.

I now realize and embrace the value of being patient, and I teach the same to young lawyers. Patience enhances their ability to collaborate with colleagues and helps them build their own unique teams.”

- Read it on *Law.com (Daily Business Review)*: “[Best Mentor Finalist: Pedro E. Hernandez, Hinshaw & Culbertson](#)” (March 20, 2026)


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